AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) ~~In a~~A steering apparatus for supporting a steering shaft to which a steering wheel is attached so that said steering shaft is displaceable in an axis-direction,

~~an improvement characterized by~~ comprising:

an inner column for supporting said steering shaft rotatably;

a pair of brackets constructed to be fitted to a ~~car~~vehicle body and disposed in positions facing each other with respect to an axis of said steering shaft;

a tension member extending between said pair of brackets;

two ~~pieces of~~ fixing members for fixing said tension member from outside of said pair of brackets;

a displacement causing member, disposed between one of said ~~tension member~~brackets and one of said fixing ~~member~~members, for causing a relative displacement between said pair of brackets; and

an outer column constructed to be held on the ~~car~~vehicle body through a connection between said tension member, said brackets and said fixing members, having a pressing portion between said pair of brackets, of which an outer periphery is ~~brought into contact~~ engaged with both of said pair of brackets due to ~~the~~ relative displacement of said brackets ~~between at least said pair of brackets~~, and having an inner peripheral surface embracing an outer periphery of said inner column,

wherein said pair of brackets ~~interlocking~~cooperating with said tension member ~~gets close to each other~~approach one another due to ~~the~~ displacement caused by said displacement causing member, a pressing force is thereby applied to said inner column via said pressing portion of said outer column, and said inner column maintains its axis-directional position with respect to said brackets through said outer column, and

wherein an axis of said displacement causing member extends through said outer column.

2. (original) A steering apparatus according to claim 1, wherein an axis of said steering shaft substantially intersects a line that connects centers of said two fixing members.

3. (previously presented) A steering apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said pair of brackets is formed with tilt grooves.

4. (currently amended) A steering apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said outer column includes an integrally-formed ~~car~~vehicle body fitting portion.

5. (previously presented) A steering apparatus according to claim 1, wherein part of said inner column is formed with at least one elongate hole extending in an axis-direction, and an inner peripheral surface of said outer column is formed with a protruded portion engaging with said elongate hole and extending inwards in a radial direction.

6. (currently amended) A steering apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said tension member is constructed of a plurality of parts that ~~can be divided so as to~~ form an annular configuration embracing said outer column.

7. (currently amended) A steering apparatus according to ~~any one of~~ claim 1, wherein said tension member is disposed outwardly in the radial direction from said inner column.

8. (new) A steering apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said tension member is disposed between a pair of parts of said pressing portion which are axially spaced on said outer column.

9. (new) A steering apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least one slit extends from an end of said outer column.

10. (new) A steering apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said displacement causing member includes a pair of cam members, of which protrusions abut one another.

11. (new) A steering apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said displacement causing member includes a lever and a pair of cooperating cams, one of which is rotatable relative to the other in response to rotation of said lever, and wherein said line that connects centers of said two fixing members constitutes a rotational axis of said lever and said one cam.